

SPORTS AS THE EXPERTS SEE THEM

How the Teams Size Up For the 1915 Baseball Season



Photos by American Press Association.

1—Maravilla. 2—Magee. 3—Davis. 4—Stallings. 5—Smith. 6—Rudolph. 7—Connelly. 8—James. 9—Everett. 10—Tyler. 11—Schmidt. 12—Gowdy.

By TOMMY CLARK.

WITH the opening of the 1915 baseball season at hand, the fans of the country should speculate on the relative strength of the teams in the big leagues. They all have been in training for some weeks, and the work of the many teams has progressed to such an extent that it is possible to get a good line on their rosters for the start of the campaign.

There is not a team in the organizations in which some changes have not been made, though the shifts in some instances have been much more sweeping than in others. Even the Boston world's champions have done some trading and transferring, with the result that several new faces will appear in the lineup when they face the barrier.

Many experts are of the opinion that the Braves will repeat this season, while others incline to the opposite belief, arguing that the team played beyond itself in 1914 and was aided by the generally unsettled conditions, which affected every city in the circuit to a greater extent than they did the club.

But on the other hand, the Braves' chances of repeating look very fine. They have strengthened their outfield by the addition of Sherwood Magee, and the prestige they have gained should help them materially. There is no doubt whatever that they will start off with greater confidence than they showed at any time last season prior to the Fourth of July.

Stallings has his pitching staff intact and the same catchers upon whom he depended in 1914. His infield will be practically the same. It is composed of comparatively young players, with the exception of Johnny Evers, who ought to have several years of major league baseball remaining in

his system. The outfield should be more stable than last year.

At the present writing Cincinnati looks like the dark horse in the National league race. History would indicate that the only real prognostication concerning the Reds would be that they will start well and finish poorly, but it may be that there will be a decided change in their fortunes this season. Certainly there can be no denying that Herzog has used excellent judgment in the changes which he has made in the team. He has got rid of a number of last season's men and has made additions where they ought to do the most good.

It looks as if he put over a master stroke in securing the veterans, Tommy Leach and Charlie Doolin. The Reds ought to be one of the best coached and drilled aggregations in the league this year. Doolin has taken in charge the pitchers and the other catchers and is imparting to them his knowledge of the game.

Herzog's men may again prove a dire disappointment, but the chances seem to favor their making a much better record than in 1914. Herzog is an aggressive, peppery leader. He was handicapped last season, but he defied precedent by lasting more than one year as leader of the hoodooed Reds.

Herzog's ambition is to beat out the New York Giants, with which team he played before becoming a manager. Maybe his ambition will be realized this year. McGraw will have a team which will make a fight for the pennant, but after looking the team over

STARS OF THE BOSTON BRAVES, WHO WILL ATTEMPT TO WIN THEIR SECOND PENNANT AND ANOTHER WORLD'S CHAMPIONSHIP

In the practice games the more certain it becomes that John J. is not entirely satisfied with the way things are shaping in the Giants' camp.

However, the Giants are always fighters and always will be so long as McGraw is in command. He has his men on their toes all the time and makes them put up a spectacular battle, even though it is a losing one from the outset.

Of the Dodgers, Phillies, Cardinals and Cubs the two western entries look better than their eastern rivals. Roger Bresnahan has instilled a lot of spirit into the Cubs.

Roger has his men pulling well together, and apparently the individuals are better satisfied than they were last year under O'Day. Roger has a good staff of pitchers. He has Archer behind the bat, with himself to depend upon as a wind paddler any time Jimmie needs relief. His infield is only fair, and his outfield little better, but the chances are that the Cubs will make

quite a battle for honors this season. The Cardinals are picked as continued contenders in the fight in spite of the fact they have lost. Of course they will not feel the loss of Wingo much, so long as Snyder is in condition to work behind the bat. Peritt's going is a loss, but Polly was never satisfied in St. Louis and for this reason never did the work he might have done.

Brooklyn has good material, but lacks the dash and pep. The American League Battle.

It looks as if there will be a mad scramble for pennant honors in the American league this season. At least four teams can be considered from this preseason angle as certain battlers for the hunting, while two others look like dark horses. And as for these other two—well, you never can tell. Remember the Braves.

The best part of the American league outlook is that the eight teams seem

more evenly matched than for many years. No one team has a big edge on the others, as the Athletics had in other years. No one team is hopelessly outclassed, as was the case of the Yankees and Naps last year.

There is a difference between the teams figured for the first division—Red Sox, Senators, Athletics and White Sox—and the other four that are figured for the second division, but the difference isn't so great.

In other years from 250 to 350 points separated the first and last place teams in the American league, but this year the difference may be only about 150 points, a fact that would make the race a thriller all the way down the stretch.

The Red Sox are being touted considerably. There is no ducking the fact that they look most powerfully good, but that doesn't mean that they will have any easy job of it.

Collins Helps White Sox.

The White Sox, aided and abetted by Eddie Collins, a bunch of pitchers that have but few peers in baseball, a brace of good catchers and some likely looking outfielders, have created pennant dreams in Chicago.

The Senators, now that they have recovered their star high jumper, Walt Johnson, can be figured as having a chance for the flag. The Senators have not lost any of the old strength since the 1914 season closed, and some of the youngsters that Griffith has

picked up may round into stars.

The Philadelphia Athletics are not entirely out of the fight. Don't think that the absence of Collins, Bender, Plank and others will act as a death blow. Connie Mack has some young pitchers who will have a chance to work regularly this year, and those boys ought to "come through." Lajoie is a bit beyond his prime, and his batting eye has dimmed slightly, but the great Frenchman ought to play the sort of game that won't make the absence of Collins felt so keenly.

The four teams above look to have the best chances for the pennant, but it's well not to overlook the Detroit outfit. Hughie Jennings still has his wrecking crew—Cobb and Crawford—and he has secured a few pitchers who promise to deliver in nice shape. If they do and if Coveleskie and Dubeu have good seasons those Jungle Boys ought to be very much among those present.

Wild Bill Runs Yanks.

The New York Yankees are a problem. The pitching staff will be made up about the same as last year. Maybe Wild Bill Donovan can get far better work out of it than Frank Chance did last year. If he does, that will mean a better rating for the Yanks.

The Cleveland Indians—there's another baseball question mark. They don't look good on paper. The pitching staff, based on its 1914 work, is one that cannot inspire first division hopes, but the pitchers may get back into their stride in 1915, and those Indians may be the surprise of the 1915 season.

The St. Louis Browns right now don't look so good. They are better than far down in the second division. They have some good pitchers, but none are real wonders. The infield is good, and the outfield is likely to be a surprise. But the team isn't a team of hitters.

Lajoie Was Hard Player to Outguess

IF Napoleon Lajoie of the Philadelphia Athletics has an admirer among the baseball men of the past and present it is Melachi Kittredge, the veteran catcher, who is now making his residence in Cleveland. According to Kittredge, it was almost impossible to outguess the Frenchman when the latter was at his best.

To illustrate his argument Kittredge relates the following anecdotes:

"When I was with Washington we had a left hander named Jacobson. One day when we were playing Cleveland he told us before he took the field that he had solved Lajoie's weakness."

"What is it?" we asked.

"A curve ball rather low," he told us. "Larry came up with three on Jacobson gave him that slow curve rather low. Larry swung. Away went the ball over Charley Jones' head. It hit the old center field fence out on Dunham avenue, bounded back and hit Jones on the head, knocking him down."

"Say," said Jones when he came in when the inning was over, "if when you

pitch Larry's weakness to him and he hits it so hard it knocks an outfielder down after it hits the fence I'd hate to be playing center if you pitched one in his groove."

"Then there was Hunter Hill. We had him on third base. The third sackers used to play a short left field when Nap Lajoie came to bat, and so did Hill the first few games he played against Cleveland. Larry, of course, took advantage of it and used to first, take a one down and beat it to first. This got Hill sore, and he came to us one day and announced he had studied Larry and could tell by his movements when the Frenchman intended to bunt."

"He won't fool me any more," said Hill. "I have him pegged, and you'll see me right on top of the plate by the time the ball leaves the bat."

"He did it, all right, and Larry bounded one off his knee into the third base bleachers. Larry got a home run, and Hill did not put a uniform on again for five weeks. In fact, that bow he got practically put him out of the big leagues."

STALLINGS AN AMBITIOUS PILOT

THE Braves have no lowly ambition. Manager George Stallings has already stated that his club intends to win four straight championships. Back in the early days, a Boston club did win the championship of the United States for seasons in succession.

That, however, was in 1872, 1873, 1874 and 1875, while the National league did not come into existence until 1876. Since that time three successive flags have been the limit.

Anson's Chicago club, with such players as Flint, Williamson, Dalrymple, Gore and Kelly, won the bunting in 1890 and also captured it during the two following seasons, only to have its winning streak broken by Boston in 1893.

The next club to win three times in succession was the Boston aggregation of 1891. Frank Selee was manager, and John Clarkson, Nichols, Stivetts and Stanley were in their prime as boxmen. The catchers were Bennett, Ganzel and Kelly. Duffy, batting .378, and McCarthy, hitting .360, were in the outfield. Bobby Lowe at second was hitting .315; Nash at third, .304; Tucker at first, .298; Long at short, .294; Merritt, a catcher, .263, and Stivetts, .209.

Surely that team was not weak at the bat, but it had nothing on the Baltimore club, which, under Ed Hahlon, grabbed the gonfalon for the next three seasons. The Orioles in 1894 had eleven men batting over .300. Seven of them in 1895 and eight of them in 1896 had an average above the coveted mark. The lowest team average for three years was .330. Boston's team average last season was .251. Hanlon's club in 1891 actually averaged .342. That season Dan Brouthers hit .344. Reitz .305, Jennings .332, McGraw .340, Keeler .327, Brodie .309, Kelly .291, Robinson .248 and Gleason .242.

Since then Pittsburgh, Chicago and New York have each won three successive flags, but none of them has been able to win the fourth. The Braves assuredly have some job out for them if they realize their leader's ambition.

HOW BIG LEAGUE PLAYERS HAVE BEEN SHIFTED AROUND THIS SEASON

There has been a general shifting of players in the National and American leagues since last December. More than thirty men have been traded, sold or released. This list includes two former stars of the Giants who will this season play for the Phillies. They are Demaree and Stock, who, along with Adams, a rookie, have been traded for Hans Lobert. One of the most important changes is the shifting of Charlie Doolin to the Reds. The list of players released, sold and traded this year follows:

SOLD OR TRADED.		RELEASED.	
From		Club	
G. Doolin.....	Philadelphia (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	Resigned.
J. A. Niehoff.....	Cincinnati (N.)	Boston (N.)	
J. Lobert.....	Philadelphia (N.)	Chicago (N.)	
A. Demaree.....	New York (N.)	Chicago (N.)	
M. Stock.....	New York (N.)	Chicago (N.)	
J. Adams.....	New York (N.)	Chicago (N.)	
S. Magee.....	Philadelphia (N.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
O. Dughey.....	Boston (N.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
H. Whitted.....	Boston (N.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
H. Hyatt.....	Pittsburgh (N.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
W. G. Johnson.....	Cleveland (N.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
W. D. Parritt.....	St. Louis (N.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
J. W. Pipp.....	Detroit (A.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
H. High.....	Detroit (A.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
E. Collins.....	Philadelphia (A.)	Pittsburgh (N.)	
		Released.	
		Club	
B. M. Reulbach.....	Brooklyn (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
J. Devore.....	Boston (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
T. Leach.....	Chicago (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
W. Sweeney.....	Chicago (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
B. Black.....	Chicago (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
C. Smith.....	Chicago (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
F. Kafora.....	Pittsburgh (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
W. Gleason.....	Pittsburgh (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
C. E. Berger.....	Pittsburgh (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Tom Quigley.....	Pittsburgh (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
J. Kelly.....	Pittsburgh (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
B. Carlich.....	Chicago (A.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
G. Choumard.....	Cleveland (A.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
J. W. Coombs.....	Philadelphia (A.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
A. Bender.....	Philadelphia (A.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Frederick.....	Philadelphia (A.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
H. Schaefer.....	Washington (A.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
H. Juul.....	Brooklyn (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
O. Peters.....	Brooklyn (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
G. Choumard.....	Brooklyn (N.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Flank.....	Chicago (F.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Flock.....	Chicago (F.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Frederick.....	Chicago (F.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Walsh.....	Chicago (F.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Black.....	Chicago (F.)	Brooklyn (N.)	
Stanley.....	Chicago (F.)	Brooklyn (N.)	

Here's Something Fans Want, Mr. Johnson

BAN JOHNSON'S league last year ceased recording the "games won and lost" by pitchers in the tables setting forth the performances of the twirlers for the 1914 season. This was done on the theory that these figures did not tell with reasonable accuracy the relative efficiency of the hurlers.

The fans, however, kicked strenuously at this innovation. They want to know the games won and lost first, and

Therefore the league has decided this year to go back to the old system. Rather, both the new and the old will be used, as was done in several of the lesser leagues.

There is not the slightest doubt that the average earned runs per game and the average hits per inning are surer criteria of pitching efficiency than the mere won and lost percentage.

Take the case of the American league last season. Under the old method Chief Bender would have been the league leader, his record standing seventeen games won and three lost.

But in all round value to his team as a pitcher he was outclassed by men like Leonard, Johnson and others.

When a pitcher hurls nearly 200 innings and allows an average of 1.01 runs each nine innings you don't have to know how many games were won and lost to know that he's a great twirler. In midseason last year several writers, noting the remarkable record Leonard, the Boston Red Sox twirler, was making in keeping down runs up to that time, alluded to him as the "greatest pitcher of the year."

There was a tolerant laugh around the country. But there's no laugh now. Leonard was bound to make good and did.

The twirler who can keep down the earned runs puts the victory up to the team back of him. His own greatness is assured.

GOLF CHAMPIONS GO TO WAR.

LAST year's amateur golf champion, J. L. C. Jenkins, has gone to the war, and Lord Annesley, who was the runner up in the Irish close championship this year, has secured a commission in the Royal Flying corps. Gordon Barry, who won the amateur champion's ship at Prestwick in 1915, has volunteered for active service.

The historic Hoylake links are being used for drill purposes by a company of the Cheshire regiment. Golfers as a class are doing their duty to their country nobly, and the generosity of them are a fine body of men, quite equal to those of any other sport.



Photo by American Press Association. PITCHER LEONARD.

after that any analytical statistics the league wants to publish are all right.

Whatever the doers may think as to the games won being an indication of efficiency, there is no doubt about it in the minds of the fans.